	2001-2002*	2002-03*	Change in 2002-03 over 2001-02
Jute & Mesta##	10.79	10.73	-0.06
Sugarcane	292.21	276.39	-15.82

*Fourth Advance Estimates for 2001-02 as on 27.06.2002
**First Advance Estimates for 2002-03 as on 12.11.2002
@Includes Groundnut, Castorseed, Sesamum, Nigerseed, Sunflower, Soyabean.
#Million bales of 170 kgs.
##Million bales of 180 kgs.

(c) The production of kharif crop this year is low because of severe drought in a number of States.

(d) Even though the agricultural production in the country shows a long-term upward trend, in order to further improve production and productivity of agricultural commodities, the Government have launched various measures such as promotion of watershed development programmes, emphasis on developing and promoting new technologies, measures for increasing availability of agricultural credit, Market Information Network, National Agriculture Insurance Scheme etc. Besides, the Government also encourage farmers to increase production through price policy which includes implementation of Minimum Support Price, procurement by public agencies etc. Apart from these, the Government have also switched over from the conventional schematic approach to macro management mode from November, 2000 for providing assistance to the States so as to give flexibility to States to address specific problems faced by them depending on local requirements. These measures would be continued in the coming years as well.

Voluntary Separation Scheme in HFCL

3149. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item

published in the Bengali Daily Anand Bazar Patrika dated the 22nd October, 2002 under the caption, "Sar Karkhana Khola Rakhte Kendrer Udyog";

(b) if so, whether the contents of the news items are true; if so, whether the VSS circular already issued by HFCL authorities has been kept in abeyance; and

(c) if not the exact position thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government have decided to close down Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. and Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. excepting its Jodhpur Mining Organisation. The employees of these companies have been offered benefits under the Voluntary Separation Scheme.

Import of Medopar medicine

3150. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the Medopar medicine for treatment of Parkinson disease, is being imported in the country at a very high price;

(b) whether Government have ordered any probe, to ascertain the correct import price; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the same medicine, in generic form is available in the country at much lower price; if so, what is the justification in importing the same at a high price?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA): (a) to (c) Medopar, used in the treatment of Parkinson's disease, is combination of Scheduled bulk drug, namely, Levodopa with non-Scheduled bulk drug Benzerazide. The price of this medicine has been fixed in accordance with the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995. To the extent of available information there is no other product with the same composition available in the country. Imports of drugs and pharmaceuticals are made in accordance with the prevailing Exim Policy.